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F-4, 1935  
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF HOME ECONOMICS  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

DIRECTIONS FOR CANNING MEAT AT HOME

BEEF, VEAL, MUTTON, LAMB, PORK, AND CHICKEN

Meats should be canned in a steam pressure cooker. The temperatures required for sterilization (240° to 250°F. corresponding to 10 and 15 pounds steam pressure) cannot be obtained inside the can or jar by means of any other canning equipment. The process of canning in a steam pressure cooker is described in Farmers' Bulletin 1471, a copy of which should be obtained and used to supplement these directions.

Heating the meat to kill bacteria is called "processing". This is the most important step in canning. Meat which is insufficiently processed may keep if held at low temperatures, but the chances are that the percentage of spoilage will be greater, and even when there are no visible signs of spoilage, certain bacteria may be present which would cause food poisoning.

The method of preserving meat by cooking it and packing it down in containers covered with a layer of melted fat depends for success upon the possibility of storing at a low temperature. This method does not kill bacteria resistant to heat, but kills only the more susceptible forms, and the layer of fat keeps others out. The Bureau of Home Economics recommends such methods only during cold weather for home consumption and for short periods of time.

Canning the surplus birds from the home poultry flock is often an economical practice, especially because the older birds may be used this way to better advantage than the young ones. Plump, well-fed hens, two years old and no longer at their best for egg production, have as good texture and better flavor than chickens six months old. Furthermore, practically the same canning processes are needed for sterilization, no matter what the age, and the meat from the young birds is more likely to become overcooked.

Preparing the Meat

Meat for canning should be fresh and in good condition, and may be used as soon as the animal heat is gone. Wipe the meat with a damp cloth, remove bone and leave only enough fat to give flavor. Excess fat will retard the penetration of heat. Cut the meat into pieces suitable in size for filling the containers without cramming.

Prepare the chickens as for cooking. Pick, singe, remove pin feathers, wash, and cut into the usual pieces for serving. Clean thoroughly, taking care not to break the gall bladder, which would make the meat unfit for use. The lungs, kidneys, eggs, and liver should not be used for canning, but the gizzard and heart may be, if desired. Trim off any large pieces of fat, so that it may not interfere with the penetration of heat. Cut the white meat in large pieces from the breast bone and shoulders, but leave the meat on the bones in other pieces. Cut the neck off close to the body. Use the very bony pieces, such as back, neck, and perhaps the feet, after they have been skinned, for making broth to fill up the containers. Make the broth by covering the bony pieces with lightly salted cold water, bring to the simmering point, and simmer until the meat becomes tender.

Preheating and Packing

Preheating may be done in several ways, the aim in all of which, however, is to heat the meat thoroughly until no red color shows. It is not necessary nor desirable to preheat until the meat is cooked to doneness, since a subsequent canning process will then overcook the meat. Either tin cans or pint glass jars may be used as containers. Wash glass jars, lids, and tin cans before using. Keep lids for tin cans dry.

Pack the chicken without cramming, and use some pieces with bone in each container. Leave space for liquid to circulate around the meat.



Preheating may be done by any one of the following methods:

Method 1. Place the meat in boiling water to cover or in the case of chicken in a small quantity of water, lower the heat, and simmer. After thoroughly heating, pack in tin cans, or glass jars, bring the broth to boiling, and pour over the meat to within 1/2 inch from the top of the container. Add salt, 1/2 to 1 teaspoon per pint. If it is desired, a small quantity of gelatin, 1 tablespoon per pint softened in cold liquid, may be added to the broth. Fully seal tin cans or partially seal glass jars, and place each as prepared in the hot cooker so the meat will not be cooled.

Method 2. Place the meat in a baking pan, add a little water, and heat in a moderate oven. If the drippings are not dark brown, dilute with boiling water or broth (from bony pieces of chicken), and pour over the meat after it is packed. If the drippings are too dark to be used, pour boiling water or broth over the meat in the container. Add salt, and gelatin, if desired, as above. Seal as described under Method No. 1.

Method 3. When tin cans are used the meat may be put directly into the containers. Add salt, but no liquid except broth in the case of chicken. Leave at least 3/4 inch space at the top of the can, for the meat will expand when heated. Preheat by placing the cans in a bath of boiling water which comes to within 1 to 1-1/2 inches of the tops of the cans. Or the cans may be heated in a steamer. Continue heating until the meat in the cans become steaming hot. This requires about 40 to 60 minutes according to the size of the can. Seal as described under Method No. 1.

### Processing

After preheating, packing, and sealing, the containers of meat should be immediately processed, or heated, in the steam pressure cooker as directed below. The time periods given apply to meat which is steaming hot, or about 170°F. when packed or sealed.

For beef, veal, pork, mutton, and lamb:

No. 2 plain tin cans	85 minutes at 15 pounds pressure, or 250°F.
No. 2-1/2 " " "	110 " " " " " " "
No. 3 " " "	120 " " " " " " "
Pint glass jars	85 " " " " " " "
Quart " " "	120 " " " " " " "

For canning chicken:

With bone:

No. 2 plain tin cans	55 minutes at 15 pounds pressure, or 250°F.
No. 2 1/2 " " "	65 " " " " " " "
No. 3 " " "	70 " " " " " " "
Pint glass jars	65 " " " " " " "
Quart " " "	75 " " " " " " "

Boned chicken

No. 2 plain tin cans	85 " " " " " " "
No. 2 1/2 " " "	110 " " " " " " "
No. 3 " " "	120 " " " " " " "
Pint glass jars	85 " " " " " " "
Quart " " "	120 " " " " " " "

### Cooling

After processing glass jars or No. 3 tin cans, allow the pressure gauge to reach zero before opening the petcock, then open it gradually so there is no sudden outrush of steam. Complete the seal on glass jars, and place them in the open air, but protected from drafts, until cooled.

When No. 2 or No. 2-1/2 tin cans are used open the petcock on the pressure cooker gradually to the end of the processing period and allow the steam to escape. Place tin cans of all sizes in running water to cool.